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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/248,111	02/11/1999	ICHIRO NAKANO	1046.1196	8405
21171	7590	05/14/2008	EXAMINER	
STAAS & HALSEY LLP			AN, SHAWN S	
SUITE 700				
1201 NEW YORK AVENUE, N.W.			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
WASHINGTON, DC 20005			2621	
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			05/14/2008	PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	09/248,111	NAKANO ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	SHAWN AN	2621	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 22 February 2008.

2a) This action is **FINAL**. 2b) This action is non-final.

3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 1-22 and 24 is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) 5-22 is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6) Claim(s) 1-4 and 24 is/are rejected.

7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a) All b) Some * c) None of:

- Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
- Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
- Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)

2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)

3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.

4) Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.

5) Notice of Informal Patent Application

6) Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Response to Amendment

1. As per Applicant's instructions as filed on 2/22/08, claims 1-4 and 24 have been amended, and claim 23 has been canceled.

Response to Remarks

2. Applicant's arguments with respect to amended claims as above have been carefully considered but are moot in view of the new grounds of rejection incorporating previously cited prior art references and a newly cited reference.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

3. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent, or on an international application by another who has fulfilled the requirements of paragraphs (1), (2), and (4) of section 371(c) of this title before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent.

The changes made to 35 U.S.C. 102(e) by the American Inventors Protection Act of 1999 (AIPA) and the Intellectual Property and High Technology Technical Amendments Act of 2002 do not apply when the reference is a U.S. patent resulting directly or indirectly from an international application filed before November 29, 2000. Therefore, the prior art date of the reference is determined under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) prior to the amendment by the AIPA (pre-AIPA 35 U.S.C. 102(e)).

4. Claims 1, 3, and 24 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Yamaguchi et al (6,256,346 B1).

Regarding claims 1 and 3, Yamaguchi et al discloses a moving image data controlling apparatus, comprising:

a moving image source input unit inputting moving image data containing image frames (Fig. 5, 700);

a moving image data encoding unit (141) compressing the moving image data from the moving image source input unit;

an information input unit (55 and/or 50; Fig. 21, Alpha-Map) inputting control/additional information externally produced and designating a processing for arbitrary designated partial image data (map information signal for distinguishing a background from an object in a picture) among the image frames of the moving image data inputted through the moving image source input unit, wherein the processing is implemented to each of the image frames (each picture/frame) of the moving image data in entirety responsive to designation of the partial image data (map information as above) (col. 20, lines 25-40; col. 25, lines 64-67; col. 26, lines 1-2);

a control information encoding unit (Fig. 21, 2006) compressing the control/additional information from the information input unit (abs.; col. 7, lines 19-21; col. 25, lines 64-67);

a data integrating unit (155) integrating the compressed image data from the moving image data encoding unit with the compressed control information from the control information encoding unit without effecting the moving image data (col. 25, lines 64-67; col. 26, lines 1-2); and

storing the integrated moving image data and the control information (161).

Regarding claim 24, Yamaguchi et al discloses a method of controlling image data, comprising:

compressing the moving image data (Fig. 5, 141) containing image frames (700);

designating an arbitrary portion among the image frames forming the moving image data, and defining the arbitrary position (bit-map, alpha-map) as control/additional information (map information signal for distinguishing a background from an object in a picture) with respect to each of the image frames (each picture/frame) of the moving image data in entirety responsive to the designating, the control information being compressed (Fig. 21, 2006; col. 20, lines 25-40; col. 25, lines 64-67; col. 26, lines 1-2); and

controlling a display of the moving image data by integrating an image data resulting from the compressing of moving image data and the compressed control information without effecting the moving image data (155; col. 25, lines 64-67; col. 26, lines 1-2).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

5. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

6. Claim 2 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Yamaguchi et al (6,256,346 B1) in view of Katto (5,694,171).

Regarding claim 2, Yamaguchi et al discloses a moving image data controlling apparatus, comprising:

a moving image source input unit inputting moving image data comprising plural data of a predetermined partial image unit (Fig. 5, 700);

a moving image data encoding unit (141) compressing the moving image data from the moving image source input unit;

an area information input unit (55 and/or 50; Fig. 21, Alpha-Map) inputting area information externally produced and defined for each arbitrary predetermined partial image unit (map information signal for distinguishing a background from an object in a picture) of the moving image data inputted through the moving image source input unit (col. 20, lines 25-40; col. 25, lines 64-67; col. 26, lines 1-2);

an area information encoding unit ((Fig. 21, 2006) compressing the area information from the area information input unit (abs.; col. 7, lines 19-21; col. 25, lines 64-67)); and

a data integrating unit (155) integrating the compressed area information from the area information encoding unit, as additional information for all pixels in each arbitrarily designated predetermined image unit of the moving image data inputted through the moving image source input, with the compressed moving image from the moving image data encoding unit, wherein the compressed moving image data is changed in entirety in accordance with the area information without effecting the moving image data (col. 25, lines 64-67; col. 26, lines 1-2).

Yamaguchi et al discloses all of the claimed subject matter with the exception of digital moving image.

However, Katto teaches a moving image encoding apparatus and, more particularly, to high-efficiency encoding of a digital moving image signal (col. 1, lines 5-7).

Therefore, it would have been considered obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the relevant art employing a moving image data controlling apparatus as taught by Yamaguchi et al to incorporate Katto's teaching as above so that the moving image source input unit inputs digital moving image data comprising plural data of a predetermined partial image unit, and the moving image data encoding unit compresses the digital moving image data from the digital moving image source input unit in order to achieve high-efficiency encoding.

7. Claim 4 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Yamaguchi et al (6,256,346 B1) in view of Hancock et al (6,195,391 B1).

Regarding claim 4, Yamaguchi et al discloses all of the claimed subject matter as discussed above with respect to amended claim 3 with the exception of a pre-amble (a computer readable medium ..., to execute operations,).

However, Hancok et al teaches hybrid video compression/decompression system comprising performing/practicing the invention on a digital computer system storing a program which when executed by a computer causes the computer to execute operations (col. 4, lines 45-53), and also teaches bit-map encoding (col. 3, lines 11-17).

Therefore, it would have been considered obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the relevant art employing a moving image data controlling apparatus as taught by Yamaguchi et al to incorporate Hancock et al's teachings as above so that a computer readable medium stores a (computer) program which when executed by a computer causes the computer to execute Yamaguchi's claimed method (as in claim 3), thereby saving significant overhead costs associated with manufacturing hardware.

Conclusion

8. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a). A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.
9. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the Examiner should be directed to Shawn S An whose telephone number is 571-272-7324.
10. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Art Unit: 2621

11. Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

/SHAWN AN/

Primary Examiner, Art Unit 2621

5/11/08